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THE LONG TERM NEED
OF PUBLIC RELATIONS . . .

Developing Men for LEADERSHIP

by J. STANFORD SMITH ✦

SIX basic questions, I believe, are central to the development of the men industry needs for leadership in public relations. In raising the questions I shall naturally draw upon my experience at General Electric. I do not do this because we pretend to have all the answers. Rather I shall refer to our manpower development program as a case study and not as a proposed universal pattern, because we recognize that every company must work out its own program based on its own objectives.

At General Electric we believe that people have the same basic expectations of business whether they have contact with us in their roles as customers, share owners, employees, suppliers, dealers, or neighbors and citizens. A person who deals with us in any one of these roles will usually be doubling in brass in one or more of the other roles. In fact, he is likely to be a one-man band. For example, a majority of our employees are becoming share owners, all of them are potential customers, they are all citizens, and their families and friends are our suppliers, dealers, and neighbors. In view of this, General Electric has integrated public and employee relations services responsibilities. You will understand, therefore, that although I use the term "public relations" in most cases I believe the phrase "and employee relations" could appropriately be added.

Now for the six questions:

Question Number 1:

Do we recognize that public relations is just as essential to a business as are the long-established functions such as manufacturing, engineering, marketing, and finance?

I start with this question because it is central to building a really

✦ *J. Stanford Smith is Manager, Public and Employee Relations Communication, the General Electric Company.*

strong manpower development program in the public relations field. And the inevitable corollary question is: *Do we recognize that standards of ability, performance, compensation, and opportunity must be just as high, just as rigorous, and just as rewarding in public relations as in those other functions?*

As to General Electric, we believe we can answer these questions affirmatively. For instance—to the four usual functions of manufacturing, engineering, marketing, and finance at the operating department level—General Electric some years ago added a fifth and co-equal function, employee and community relations. The men in public and employee relations work, whether in operating components or at headquarters, are expected to meet just as rigorous standards of ability and performance as in any other phase of the business and they can expect equally satisfying rewards in terms of compensation, recognition, and opportunity on a company-wide basis.

I repeat that such an approach is central in the development of men of leadership in any organization. My impression is that far too many public relations people are failing before they even start by not helping top management understand the importance of public relations problems and by thus allowing the function to be regarded as a side issue. Some public relations people even seem to take mistaken pride in thinking of themselves as belonging to a different category from other business men.

Question Number 2:

Have we defined our work? Have we adequate theory as to what we are doing?

We cannot educate, recruit, or develop men for a function unless we know what the function is and can properly describe it. Obviously, if a company's primary concept of the public relations function is getting publicity to promote the sale of products, your manpower development program will reflect that concept. It will be far different, however, if you conceive of public relations as having such responsibilities as understanding and appraising the trends of the future, developing plans to meet them, stimulating and teaching each member of the company to measure up to what the public can reasonably expect of us, teaching the public what they can reasonably expect, and winning the deserved understanding and support of each individual with whom the company has contact.

In defining public relations work, we must, of course, keep ever before us the fact that how we act is the foundation for all public relations

activities. And this means dealing in the same fundamental way with all the groups who have a stake in our business—customers, share owners, employees, other business men, and all citizens.

Business men long ago developed sound approaches for dealing with people in their role as customers. The big need is for public relations men who, instead of looking for magic potions, will apply the same business-like approaches which have been so successful in the customer relations area, to our contacts with people in all their other roles.

Question Number 3:

How can we best recruit public relations men?

I have heard endless discussions on this subject in which public relations managers all agreed that they wanted to hire men after they had several years of experience in someone else's shop. It reminds me of the question, how long can a colony of leeches live on each other?

The only way all of us can make major progress in developing men of leadership is for all of us to be willing to make the investment of going to the colleges and recruiting men and then helping them get the necessary experience and training on the job.

What are the specifications for the men we should recruit? I suggest these:

Character. We completely agree with Edward Bernays when he says that the "ideal" public relations man should "first of all be a man of character and integrity." This is no profession for flim-flam artists. What we claim must turn out to be true. We need men who deeply believe in doing what is right; not just out of expediency, but out of principle.

Perception. The good public relations man must recognize central determinative issues, set his objectives, and accomplish them without getting enmeshed in myriads of side issues. He must be a man who, on comparatively meager evidence, can recognize and plan to meet the truly important trends of the future.

Creativity. This is the ability to meet each new challenge with a creative response and to express this response in useful form. He must be capable of dealing with abstract ideas, as well as concrete situations.

Drive. We need men who have the compulsion to move forward, to get the work done—men who have an alarm clock as well as a calendar in their souls—men who are constantly searching for new and better ways of doing things.

Persuasiveness. This is a combination of many personal traits and skills which enable a man to communicate and to manage others by gaining their voluntary support. Included in persuasiveness are an interest in people and the great gift of enthusiasm. This is no profession for cynics, for "the world belongs to the believers."

General Electric recruits well over 100 men a year direct from college for our advertising and public relations and employee relations training courses. But this is not something that only large companies can do. The *Wall Street Journal,* for example, has had outstanding success in recruiting by paying adequate starting rates, carefully defining the type of men it seeks, cultivating just a few colleges rather than trying to play the field, and then providing the recruits with adequate challenge and opportunity. If every one of us were to follow a similar program in proportion to our size and needs our total manpower problem could be completely changed in less than a decade.

Question Number 4:

What is the best education for men entering public relations?

On this there is wide disagreement, in part growing out of widely differing interpretations of the public relations function.

An analysis of the educational background of our successful people in public relations does not show any clear correlation between their major field of study and job performance. Most of our people are liberal arts or business administration graduates, although a few are engineers. Several have Masters degrees. Most of them have majors in business administration, economics, English, journalism, or political science, but several other fields are represented.

Analysis of our experience shows that three educational ingredients are essential to success in public relations:

1. Well-above-average intelligence backed up by well-above-average grades.

2. A sound general education. We are inclined to be skeptical of vocational training courses in such subjects as news writing or typography.

3. An extra-curricular record that shows drive, an interest in the human equation, and the ability to gain voluntary cooperation.

Also, regardless of his formal education, a man must have or develop:

1. A working knowledge of business economics. I'm often amazed at how few public relations men really try to understand our business system, when one of their biggest jobs is teaching economics.

2. A sophisticated appreciation of current politics. Most of the major issues of the day are a mixture of economics, morals, and politics. If business men are to be allowed to serve all citizens most effectively, they must learn how to overcome their ineffectiveness in politics.

3. A knowledge of our company and industry. As Robert Curtin of DuPont emphasized in the September, 1956 issue of *Public Relations Journal,* "Failure to learn the business we seek to advance is the major hazard in operating at the policy level."

4. The communication skills—both mass and man-to-man—needed for his work. Most of these can be effectively learned on the job by an alert person who has a basic facility for self-expression—especially in view of the formal training now offered by most companies.

Question Number 5:

How do we make education a life-long process?

Somehow in each of us there still lives the small boy who wants to chant on the last day of school, "No more pencils, no more books, no more teacher's sassy looks." It would be so satisfying to say "Now my education is finished." It's little wonder that one of our executives recently told a group of educators: "We get far too many men who come to us feeling they have 'completed their education,' and it takes a string of psychological bombs to re-establish the habit of study."

Dean Coffman, of UCLA Law School, puts it this way: "I believe that education is a continuing process which can never be completed as long as a man lives." He challenges his fellow educators with this objective, "... We should attempt with all that is in us to light that divine spark in the breasts of the students that drives them forward, that makes them want to learn, that creates that inquisitive and acquisitive mind which really searches for the truth, that burns with the white-hot flame which makes the student completely and forever dissatisfied with anything less than his best."

At General Electric we try to help a man continue his education through a variety of methods. First, each college graduate joining a company training course, whether in public and employee relations, manufacturing, engineering, business training, or one of five other training programs, has about three years of rotating assignments, during which he gains experience in several jobs and functions. Let me emphasize that he learns by having to do a job for which he is made responsible, not by observing some one else do it, or by doing make-believe work.

Simultaneously, he has after-hour classes or intensive periods set aside for formal educational activities in the objectives, background, and techniques of the business. After three years he is ready for a so-called permanent job, but he is encouraged to stretch and grow by a great deal of reading, further courses and seminars, by taking part in professional societies, by leading courses himself, and if he desires, by doing advanced work under the company's tuition refund plan at a nearby university.

Admittedly, a few of these things can be done most successfully by a large company. But most of them, as well as other approaches, can be done by any organization, regardless of size. The one essential ingredient is the determination to make education a life-long process.

Question Number 6:

How do we encourage men to develop for business leadership?

Far too many so-called manpower development programs have concentrated almost exclusively on formal education and training activities. If the evidence of General Electric's research is valid, it appears that educational activities, while important, are supporting activities. The decisive area of manpower development lies in the manager's conscious effort to establish a climate, a working atmosphere, in which every person in the organization is stimulated, encouraged, and guided to develop his own powers to their maximum potential.

This is the main finding of an extensive, three-year research study by General Electric into how leadership develops. In the course of this study, the researchers not only sifted a vast library of books, monographs, records, and pamphlets in English, German, French, and Swedish. They also interviewed executive personnel in 50 major firms, and combed the records of 2,000 General Electric managers for clues on the elements which comprise that sixth sense, the intuitive grasp which marks the successful leader. Depth interviews with 300 successful General Electric managers provided particularly useful data.

The distillation of these findings served as the basis for the Company's new philosophy in manager development, and is rapidly finding acceptance in the development of leaders in all functions.

From these studies, it appears that a sound manpower development program must first recognize that it is is impossible to graft talent and ambition onto the personality of someone who does not have them. But we can create a favorable climate and give guidance to the man of ability who is his own self-starter.

As public relations managers, have we given sufficient attention to the kind of "climate for development" that we have created in our own organizations? Are we setting goals and standards that are high enough to stretch men's abilities? Are we using policies as tight restraining devices or as guidelines to freedom of action? Are company objectives thought through and known to the organization? Do we have a "well-run shop," where everyone knows his job and its relationships to others, and where planning is insisted upon as a necessary prelude to action? Are we afraid to delegate difficult work to our colleagues, and hold them accountable for results, or are we perpetually "second-guessing" them and stifling every idea that is not our own? Does everyone in the shop have the conviction that opportunity for development and advancement is open to all, or do we appear to have anointed a few "crown princes" for favored advancement? Have we had the courage to talk over such questions with our associates, and given them an opportunity to help establish a climate where everyone is inspired to develop to his full potential?

Opportunities for Growth

It is our view that manpower development starts with profound questions as to the basic assumptions on which the business is run and that the most successful development program is the self-development that takes place when men have stirring opportunities to stretch and grow.

The six fundamental challenges which have been presented bring a host of tough ancillary problems with which public relations management must deal. Let me cite just three as examples:

1. There is the problem of developing high standards and outstanding competence in specialized aspects and techniques of public relations without bringing about pre-occupation with them. We need men who, while having extraordinary competence in the techniques of public relations, continually view them as a means to accomplish an organization's objectives, not as ends in themselves.

2. There is the problem of helping men develop very early in their careers a broad understanding of the company and the economic and political system in which it operates. From the start of his career in public relations a man needs this breadth of understanding. This is not nearly so true in the early stages of functions such as sales or engineering.

3. There is the problem of breaking public relations people of the habit of attempting to become communication bottlenecks instead of stimulating and teaching every person in their companies to carry forward the public relations work.

These three problems are but typical of the many individual problems that must be met as we tackle the six determinative challenges involved in developing men of leadership.

There is a proverb to the effect that:

> If you are planning for one year, grow corn;
> If you are planning for a hundred years, grow trees;
> But if you are planning for the ages, grow men.

I'm convinced that today's public relations executives, if they so desire, are equipped to do the leadership development job that the ages demand. What we need now is the awareness of its compelling importance and the determination to move ahead. ●

* * *

THE VILLAIN IN THE PIECE

"He is the arch-enemy of conformity, dedicated to honesty and really sincere—'sincerity'—not the sort you get from the empty speeches of these public relations experts who confront us in these days of the 'big picture.'"

—James O'Neill, Jr., film critic, *Washington Daily News*

"Mr. Chase offers no recipe for 'thinking big.' He simply wants people to think. Maybe that's to much to expect—and maybe as a result of his hard-headed realism, he'll never be interviewed by Martha Dean—but he does succeed in discrediting the public relations pabulum with which politicians, progressive educators, and Madison Avenue experts have been spoonfeeding America for too many years."

—Book review by James M. Black, *The Management Review*

"Albert Einstein loved the public but disliked public relations. He believed that a person's beliefs should be spoken unashamedly and that his actions should be dictated solely by his conscience. 'Never do anything against conscience,' he once stated, 'even if the state demands it.'"

—Harrison Brown, *Saturday Review*

* * *

PROPAGANDA AND PR

"It is chiefly because public relations specialists are paid propagandists that society has to take cognizance of them. They are propagandists on any view of the term.

"Broadly, there are two schools of thought about propaganda. One equates it with what we have called persuasive activities. The other—which corresponds with the popular interpretation—confines it to persuasive activities on controversial issues. On the first view, all public relations practitioners are propagandists. On the second, many are sometimes propagandists. It is mainly because they are propagandists in the second sense that they are potentially dangerous as well as useful to society."

—J. A. R. PIMLOTT
Public Relations and American Democracy
Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1951

IN PR AGENCIES . . .

A NEED For Better Employee Relations

by HENRY SCHAPPER ✦

ARE you so pre-occupied with your clients' public relations you are neglecting your own—in the area of employee relations? There are a number of indications that many public relations firms are overlooking some important tangibles—and intangibles—so that they are losing out on the services of top flight employees. The neglect goes beyond the usual ones of salary, working conditions, etc., into imponderables to which PR firms should be particularly sensitive.

Here are eight questions, based on what many PR men and women have told me, by which you can help to determine whether your firm is doing all it can to attract and hold the best working talent.

Do Your Employees Get Public Recognition?

Some firms are bound by an iron rule that no individuals may be mentioned, even in columns of specialized newspapers and magazines. Many enlightened places, however, regularly send out releases on employee activities and achievements to the general as well as to the specialized press. Such companies know by experience that important or interesting news invariably sheds as much, if not more, radiance upon the agency as upon the person.

A valuable by-product is a general sense of ease that cannot be generated in a set-up where vague restrictions penalize employees. Two researchers from the University of Michigan just reported in a study on why people like or dislike their jobs that the most important source of job satisfaction is "recognition"—the need to feel one's achievements are made know to others. This is why a good feeling envelopes all who work where they believe they can grow to their fullest potential.

✦ *Henry Schapper, former President, Publicity Club of New York, Inc., now heads his own personnel agency specializing in executives for the communication fields.*

Are You Overly Dependent Upon Resumes?

Possibly no area of employer-applicant relationships is so controversial nor so foggy as opinions about resumes. One important PR executive writes me, "I expect a PR man to be able to present himself well in writing. When he does this badly, I wonder about his qualifications."

But ask any ten outstanding PR people their reactions to the same resume and there will be ten different answers, all the way from "poor" to "excellent."

Actually, resume preparation is an arduous technique. But seldom anywhere in schooling or working career have PR persons—employee or employer—received training or guidance either in preparing or inevaluating a resume.

The assumption that a resume really represents the applicant is usually erroneous. It should be used, therefore, only as a helpful accessory in a firm's assay of a possible affiliate, not as a short-cut, eliminating device.

If you want to save time and emotional strain in achieving the best talent available, the best way is to describe your needs to an employment agency whose own personnel has had experience in your field, read recommended resumes in the light of this discussion, lean on the agency's recommendations, and take the time to see in person those few who most nearly meet your requirements.

Do You Start Looking Too Soon?

Some agencies start searching for a new employee too soon. An account is in the offing. Sometimes it helps nail it if the prospective client can be told, "We have so-and-so ready to go to work on this for you. You know what a brilliant job he did on such-and-such a product."

The practitioner has been interviewed several times, his references have been reached, but he does not get the job. There wasn't—and isn't—any. Something kept agency and client apart. The applicant's morale slides while he debates within himself where he went wrong. He's embarrassed to report he didn't connect, and cannot explain that the whole procedure was a sales device exploiting his experience because he has no way of knowing that. He may be placed in danger of using his references too often, thus tiring them out. Be fair. If your firm is not large enough to be purposely overstaffed—as some make a point of being—tell the employment agency the status of the matter, so that the job seeker may know and guide his performance accordingly.

Do You Withhold Information?

Most creative people find it difficult to discuss salary, fringe benefits, and other vital income matters. On the other hand, many firms seem to keep these items more or less a secret, possibly unintentionally. But the practical effect is that the new and baffled employee learns pertinent, and reassuring, information only by chance over a long period of time.

The founder of a leading 4A advertising agency says, "Every time you make a selection of a person, a segment of your future hangs in the balance. Once having selected him, go all out in making him welcome, and spare the mysteries." One agency prepares a fully explanatory booklet to cover these matters.

How Do You Handle Tests?

To test or not to test is *not* the question here; the whole subject cannot be dealt with in brief. There seem to be, however, a few feelings that might well be aired.

What disturbs a job-seeker is the frustrating sense that he is to undergo a test on something he cannot anticipate and for which he cannot prepare. This bafflement often slides into horrible introspection when the person is informed he has "failed." There may be really damaging effects on the morale of one who is told this about a test which plays a large part in deciding his future on grounds of which he can have no knowledge.

Regrettably, few applicants are aware, hence cannot appreciate that (1) firms do not put people through testing unless seriously interested in employing them; (2) the process costs an employer between $35 and $125; (3) the wise firm does not use the test, no matter if it seems to, as the sole criterion of employment.

The public relations director of a major corporation believes at no time should the word "fail" be used in connection with such testing. He says, further, "The danger is that results of tests be taken as the whole answer. They should be used only as an adjunct to interview reactions, checks with prior employers, and other data having a bearing on fitness for the job. Their chief value lies in giving the employer the opportunity to learn quickly and painlessly what he would find out anyway."

Many who employ such tests agree that as presently used they come late in most people's careers. Scientific probing should have been done before a vocation was determined upon, and thus career changing and other painful dislocations in persons in their late twenties or thirties may have been avoided.

When employers do what school should have done there is an obligation to impart greater understanding to the applicant on what the employer is really trying to accomplish through the tests, and room for more tactful handling of the whole matter on the part of employers.

Do You Keep Applicants on the Hook?

Often an applicant is whirled more flatteringly than college fraternity rushees through five, six or ten talks, is breakfasted, lunched, dined by everyone who might conceivably have any say about his joining the firm. Then, silence.

This leaves the outsider dangling, unable to plan intelligently. His confusion is intensified with unemployment checks getting smaller and smaller as the weeks merge into months. What is he to do? What *can* he do?

When a position has been filled only a few enlightened executives promptly write each person interviewed a personally signed letter explaining the who and the why of the choice. The next best thing to losing out on a job is to have the sting taken away by being told what happened.

How Do You Receive Applicants?

The capable man knows that in practice public relations like charity, should begin at home. Besides, it isn't only the office boy or secretary who may be president one day. Often the job seeker rises to a post where he does important hiring. Four years ago, an A-1 writer held a confirmed appointment to discuss a PR job with a good advertising agency. He appeared on time, only to discover that his man had been out of town several days. Nobody had bothered to try to reach the writer. Needless to say, he got a poor impression of the way PR operated within that agency. Later, as an executive of another agency, the absent one's resume crossed his desk. While the work record was attractive, the suspicion could not be downed that his person-to-person relations were not of the same calibre, and the resume went into the wastebasket.

The first voice your organization presents is usually the phone operator's, and the first face the receptionist's. Their attitude inescapably reflect the tenor of the company to a possible employee. Many a qualified public relations person feels like turning on his heel at the upstage, brusque, treatment often encountered at these two vital points.

The properly run firm habitually treats all outsiders courteously, via phone and reception desk, and tries not to keep callers waiting, especially if there by appointment. This consideration is most appreciated by the job-seeker who can afford less than anyone else to waste precious time in pointless sitting around, no matter how beautifully appointed the waiting room.

How Do You Rate?

Mere mention of the names of some firms is like a magnet for the best talent. The names of other firms are anathema. The firm, agency or corporate department that wants to attract the best of this talent needs to practice what it preaches about good employee relations. ●



FURTHER COMMENT

"It was hard to avoid being amused after consecutive reading, in the July issue, of articles by Alvin Outcalt and Eugene Cowen. Outcalt presents a glowing future for all of us in PR but warns against letting our professional standards be hurt by lobbyists and baloney benders within our ranks. Whereupon Cowen, talking of how to use Congressmen for our personal profit, sounds exactly like a lobbyist and baloney bender.

I have known reasonably well the reactions of two Congressmen—one of whom I also did work for—to this sort of double-talk Cowen uses. They welcome PR men advancing ideas to improve the Congressman's communication with his constituents; Cowen rightly says they have little time and often not enough savvy about such things. But when he gets over (Cowen, that is) into devices for using the Congressman as a prop to bolster the ego of a commercial firm's employees and even using the Congressional Record and free mailing privileges as the means to plug a product, here I have found the Congressman's reaction something less than pleasant. The bane of a Congressman's life is the swarm of lobbyists and baloney benders cleverly seeking to exploit him for commercial ends—and often using devices and traps from which he knows he cannot escape.

Maybe one of the things PR men most need to do is step back and recognize the difference between commercial exploitation and their responsibility as citizens. What have we gained if we win a fee but lose the respect of leading citizens for PR as a maturing, responsible profession?"

—PAUL BLANSHARD, JR., *Assistant Director*
News Bureau, University of Pennsylvania

"Mr. Blanshard is concerned about public relations people using their profession to lobby and to trap Congressmen. But is there any area of public affairs where abuses are not possible? To suggest that public relations practitioners should avoid every activity where there is a negative possibility is tantamount to suggesting that public relations as a profession be abolished.

"My article suggested several ways that joint projects could be of benefit both to Congressmen and to the clients of public relations practitioners. It cautioned that they should be guided by 'law, ethics and good taste' and advised that 'the Congressman himself is the best judge of the propriety of any such project.' I regret that Mr. Blanshard assumed only the worst possibilities could result."

—EUGENE S. COWEN
Washington, D. C.

ANTICIPATE THE UNEXPECTED . . .

THE KEY *To Successful Special Events*

By JAMES PATRICK FOLEY ✦

DID you ever stage a special event which went off perfectly without even the slightest hitch or embarrassing moment? Chances are you did not. Very few of us have.

Special events have a way of brewing their own peculiar brand of trouble. Spontaneous, unpredictable incidents are most difficult and are caused by carelessness, accident, the unexpected, even sabotage.

Probably the most grievous special event sin of all is carelessness, for it is not only inexcusable but it is discrediting to all concerned. Just imagine the embarrassment and torture caused a host company when its public relations director unthinkingly ordered a meat luncheon for a Good Friday gathering of Catholic clergy in Chicago some years ago.

Then there is the case of a well-known company which recently spent thousands of dollars perfecting a new product. To acquaint the public and the press with the merits of the item, the company held an open house hosted by the company president and highlighted by a film depicting the research and development of the product.

Following introductory remarks by the president, the public relations director flipped a switch to darken the hall and commence the film. Instead of the new product, however, the film featured a competitive item by a rival firm.

In justice to the public relations director, rumor had it that a saboteur-salesman from the enemy camp had switched films. But a careful preview of the film would have avoided the embarrassing error.

✦*James Patrick Foley is Public Relations Assistant, Association of American Railroads, Washington, D. C.*

The Occasional Accident

Much more frequent is the accident type of incident like that which marred the opening of a new bank branch not long ago.

The public relations officer was guiding the directors through the bank's huge, modern vault when he was summoned to answer a long distance telephone call. While he was gone, the vault door accidentally closed triggering the timelock and imprisoning the entire board of directors until the next morning.

Public relations directors believe the unexpected is the most fearful special event trouble-maker. Yet, even the unexpected incident can be minimized or eliminated completely with a little foresight.

The 1957 Inaugural parade proved the value of anticipating and preparing for the unexpected. The parade committee had arranged for an automobile to carry each governor who intended to ride in the parade. Besides reserving cars for the expected governors, a few were put aside for unexpected dignitaries. Luckily this was done, for on parade morning one of the governors who had not accepted called headquarters demanding to know the whereabouts of his car.

Past Experience Not Enough

Even anticipating and planning do not always solve this kind of trouble. Nor does past experience always serve as a loyal answer. For example, the 1953 Inaugural parade developed into a serial type affair with many units passing the reviewing stands minutes apart. The huge gaps, some over a block long, which separated the marchers were caused by high-stepping and fancy routines by men and horses.

The parade committee was helpless in attempts to close ranks. However, the 1957 parade committee was headed by the same chairman who vowed that the 1953 holes in the line of march would not be repeated.

To keep ranks closed tightly, a radio-television hookup was installed with monitors placed all along the parade route. Marshals, at each monitor point, were instructed via radio and TV to keep the marching units closed tightly. The system worked magnificently. All fancy maneuvering was eliminated and the paraders marched like precisioned marionettes past the reviewing stand.

Then came the unexpected again. The huge theme float, over 108 feet long, broke down, punching a gaping hole right in the parade middle. Oddly enough, the day prior to the parade the gigantic float had made a superb test run.

Publicity Ricochets

Sometimes even good publicity can ricochet as it did several times during the last Inaugural parade.

To publicize the St. Lawrence Seaway float depicting Canadian-American friendship, someone proposed that an Uncle Sam contest be held. The winner of the contest would ride the float along with a Mountie from Canada.

The idea caught on like wildfire and the grist from the parade publicity mills was consumed by a cooperative press. The parade office was deluged with Uncle Sam candidates from Alabama to Wyoming. The contestants ranged vertically and horizontally from midget to king size.

The publicity staff patted themselves on the back. "Great idea" everyone said until someone revealed a newspaper clipping which stated "Uncle Sam marching unit from Buffalo, New York, to be scratched from parade in favor of winner of Uncle Sam contest."

The story kicked off a storm of protest. Objections, on behalf of the Buffalo Uncle Sam marching unit, were sent from all over the country to Senators, Congressmen, parade officials and even the White House. Finally, the parade committee compromised and decided to permit Buffalo's Uncle Sam unit to escort the winner of the Seaway's Uncle Sam contest.

The Saga of Miss Burma

That turmoil was replaced by another tussle featuring as combatants the parade chairman and Miss Burma, the three-ton elephant mascot of the Republican Party.

In order to maintain a fast, two-and-a-half hour parade, all marchers were instructed to keep a military cadence of 120 steps per minute. Since it was doubtful that Miss Burma could keep up such a pace she was eliminated as a parade participant.

When it became known that Miss Burma was out, Republican officials, children and elephant fans yelled like Dixie rebels.

In desperate self-defense, Miss Burma was challenged to a three-mile road test at 120 steps per minute. When Miss Burma completed the hike successfully her owner dared the parade chairman to do likewise.

The chairman ignored the dare and Miss Burma triumphantly trumpeted that she would not only be in the parade but would personally appear in the lobby of a Washington, D. C. hotel and register all visiting Young Republicans.

This was excellent publicity until Miss Burma's three tons got stuck in the revolving door of the hotel. While Miss Burma was being extricated her 300-pound child entered through another door and acted as a stand-in.

This, too, was wonderful publicity until Little Miss Burma began acting like a baby in search of a diaper.

Reasons for Special Events

Despite the problems, troubles, and worries involved in special events, their publicity, goodwill, and prestige values make them worthwhile. However, special events are seldom held for these reasons alone. More often, special events are staged to solve industry problems, to introduce a new product to trade or consumer groups, to increase sales, to unite segments of an industry in a common goal, to educate and inform various publics, or to gain prestige and recognition.

A special event can last a day, a week, a month, or even a year depending on its nature and purpose. The bank opening is a typical example of a one-day affair while Chemical Progress Week and the Home Shows exemplify annual week-long events.

Regardless of their length and purpose, special events should be carefully planned and precisely executed right from the start. The best way to prevent the unexpected from upsetting your plans is to make out a detailed checklist *tailored to your particular event.*

Here is my basic list which may suggest things to be included:

1. **Staff Meetings** . . . Anyone omitted? . . . Regularly scheduled?
2. **First Staff Meeting** . . . To determine budget, location, duration, name and theme of event, purpose, committees, anything else?
3. **Program of Events** . . . Master of Ceremonies decided upon? . . . Speakers selected and confirmed? . . . Instructions and assignments to participants clear? . . . Program approved?
4. **Invitation List** . . . Who is to suggset names? . . . Who approves list? . . . Has anyone been omitted?
5. **Invitations** . . . What kind? . . . When to be mailed? . . . Follow up mailing?
6. **Publicity and Promotion** . . . Scheduled? . . . Tie-in promotions? . . . Special gimmicks?
7. **Weather** . . . Forecast obtained? . . . Alternative plan in case of bad weather?
8. **Services for Guests and Speakers** . . . Hotel reservations? . . . Guides? . . . Transportation?
9. **Printed Materials** . . . Official program? . . . Guest list? . . . Maps of location? . . . Name badges? . . . Signs? . . . Anything else?
10. **Press Coverage** . . . Invitations? . . . Release and photos available? . . . Platform for cameramen? . . . Fact sheets and biographies? . . . Telephones, typewriters and tables? . . . Press room? . . . Post-program interviews and pictures?

11. **At the Scene** . . . Adequate parking? . . . Registration desk? . . . Receptionists, ushers? . . . Seating arrangements? . . . Decorations, exhibits? . . Problem of sun in the eyes? . . . Telephone service? . . . Coat checking? . . . First aid station? . . . Programs or kits to be distributed? . . . Facilities for children? . . . Central office or information booth?
12. **Food and Beverage Arrangements** . . . Menu selected? . . . Adequate service?
13. **Platform Arrangements** . . . Rostrum or speaker's stand? . . . Sound? . . . Projection equipment? . . . Seating of speakers planned? . . . Special lighting?
14. **Supplemental Events** . . . Plant tours? . . . Entertainment for wives?
15. **Controls** . . . Firm deadlines for completion of all preparations? . . . System for keeping track of responses to invitations? . . . Rehearsal of program?
16. **Aftermath** . . . Arrangements for returning borrowed equipment? . . . Accounting of expenditures? . . . Final report? . . . Letter or token mailed to guests and press? ●

* * *

INTERNATIONAL PR NETWORKS

In the October 1957 issue of pr *there appeared an article by David L. Lewis, "International Networks: PR's New Golden Age." While not pretending to be definitive, it is, in the judgment of the Editors, the most complete run-down of existing networks in print. We welcome additional information on these networks from our readers. Meanwhile we are pleased to furnish the following addendum to the section headed "The Leading Networks."*—Ed.

EDWARD GOTTLIEB & ASSOCIATES LTD., NEW YORK. *Maintains fully integrated offices in Paris and Montreal. These offices are permanently staffed. Affiliates in nearly all other European countries west of Poland, including Great Britain, Holland, Germany and Italy. Also affiliates in eight Latin American countries and Puerto Rico. Began operations in 1949.*

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THE PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS

Each quarter Dr. Donald W. Krimel selects items from professional journals in the social sciences which have implications for the public relations field.—Ed.

A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH

BRUCE H. WESTLEY, University of Wisconsin, and MALCOLM S. MACLEAN, JR., Michigan State University, *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1

"I have never been able to find a satisfactory phrase to describe what I try to do," said Ivy Lee, and surely thousands of public relations practitioners in ensuing decades have echoed his thought. Frustration in the task of defining itself is, and long has been, a major characteristic of American public relations.

The practitioner knows that the persuasion of people is an immensely complex process, and from the enormity of the job of describing that process precisely and in detail, he backs off in the direction of the hearty "That's good public relations" and the reproachful "That's bad PR." Granting that "common sense" and the broad generality have their place in analysis of the public relations function, it remains that progress requires analysis of public relations in terms of a precise, systematic vocabulary and a set of commonly understood and accepted concepts. Solution of such hard professional problems as description of public relations and measurement of the results of the public relations function depend upon the development of that concept-and-vocabulary structure.

The article by Westley and MacLean describes clearly the careful development, by professional social scientists, of a basic vocabulary to be used in the study of communications. In doing so it serves public relations because that vocabulary describes a major part of public relations.

In effect, it presents the principal elements in communication as:

1. The *communicator,* " . . . a personality or social system engaged in selecting and transmitting messages purposively."
2. "The *receiver,*" or "the public."
3. *"Gatekeepers,"* those who "man" the channels of communication (editors, teachers, etc.)
4. All *things* that might be transmitted.
5. *Channels.*
6. *Encoding.* In terms of normal public relations vocabulary, this is the process wherein public relations men (and editors, etc.) put things into transmissible form.

7. *Decoding*, the process whereby the receiver "interiorizes," or interprets, the message he receives.
8. *Feedback*, the means by which communicators and those who man the channels of communication obtain information about the effects of messages on receivers.

The authors have used impressive care and precision in developing their "model." The vocabulary and the conceptual structure they present can be useful to the individual public relations man who wants to analyze his communicative function in its parts. They can be helpful also as a consistent, precise, common language for public relations people gathered together to discuss their trade.

COMPARATIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF TELEVISED AND LARGE CLASSES AND OF SMALL SECTIONS

LAURENCE SIEGEL and F. G. MACOMBER, Miami University (Ohio), *The Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 48, No. 6

In trying to find out varying effects when people are reached in small groups, as against communication to large groups and communication through television, the authors used student subjects and thought in terms of formal education. Their findings, however, can be applied to public relations functions in such fields as training programs, public addresses, and closed-circuit TV presentations.

Their conclusions:

1. Acquisition of *subject-matter* knowledge is not significantly reduced when people are addressed in large groups or through TV, rather than in small groups (30-35 individuals).
2. The above finding applies to bright people in about the same degree as it applies to less bright ones.
3. People who are addressed in large groups tend to rate the communicator (or instructor) lower than do people addressed in small groups. Those addressed in small groups or by TV are essentially alike in their rating of the communicator.
4. Students who are taught a course in a small class rate the course much higher than those taught in large classes or through TV.
5. People prefer being approached in a small group to being approached in a large group.
6. Offered the choice of TV communication or the small group form, after experience with each, subjects split fairly evenly in their preferences.
7. There is some tendency for brighter persons to prefer the small group—over the large group and over TV—more consistently than less bright persons so prefer.

In the language of Westley and MacLean (above), it should be remembered that this report deals almost exclusively with the reactions of receivers to certain kinds of channels. It can help in the practitioner's selection of channels for some public relations tasks, but there also must be consideration of the talents and limitations of the communicator, problems in encoding, and the possible need for immediate feedback (unavailable if TV is used). The pattern of the Siegel and Macomber conclu-

sions does seem to indicate that receivers addressed in small groups are much more likely to look upon the communicator with favor, an attitude that presumably will play a big part in the decoding process.

AN ADJECTIVE CHECK LIST FOR THE STUDY OF "PRODUCT PERSONALITY"

W. D. WELLS, F. J. ANDRIULI, F. J. GAY, and S. SEADER, Rutgers University, Newark Colleges, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 41, No. 5

The authors present an "Adjective Check List" which they have developed for use in studying the mental image, or stereotype, in the minds of members of the public relative to a product or institution. The list was designed to be short enough for use in door-to-door surveys.

Instruction in how to put the list into use is included in the article. Among many examples of response patterns the list has produced: Plymouth owners are seen as "sad," "quiet," "fat" personality types, Ford owners as "merry," "tall," "sharp." Cadillac owners? They are seen as "fat," "cold," "vain." (The responses were obtained from 100 college fraternity members.) D.W.K.

* * *

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND DEDICATES NEW BUILDING FOR PR

". . . Never before in the history of mankind has there been a greater need for 'speech that is intelligible.' We are faced with the supreme irony of a civilization that has, by its technical skill, reached the capacity to destroy itself. If there is an antidote to this threatening mutual self-destruction, that antidote is mutual understanding.

It is certainly axiomatic that there can be no understanding without communication.

The wonderful new building we have seen this morning is dedicated to the tremendous task of helping give us the young men and women who will assume the role of communicators. . . .

There are two other reasons why we should place emphasis on public relations today. The journalistic profession is generally accepted as being older than public relations, and therefore has had a lot more pundits stand up and tell it what to do. . . .

The second reason is . . . that of the 176 students enrolled in a course of study directed toward a major this fall . . . 139 are working in public relations. Just in the upper division, 82% are public relations majors.

Public relations has been an educational force, despite its occasional shortcomings, for tremendous good. It has become basic with almost every successful business, association, government, public cause or idea.

More and more, as a standard practice, we are looking to public relations counsel to advise the sound course of action—not just in emergencies—but in all matters of public understanding.

We are turning, as never before, to public relations to tell us the path to understanding. Understanding between business and consumer; between nation and nation; and, one of the bright stars that outshines Sputnik, the People to People program.

If we can agree on one thing, let it be that your survival and mine does not depend on more and deadlier and swifter weapons.

It depends, I would have you believe, on the ability to reach men's minds. Let us give thanks for buildings such as this dedicated to development of these vital skills."

Excerpts of remarks of Ben L. Williams, Manager, Public Relations Division, Van Sant, Dugdale Co., Inc., Baltimore at dedication of building, housing the Department of Journalism and Public Relations, University of Maryland, November 23, 1957. Mr. Williams officially represented the American Public Relations Association, Baltimore Public Relations Council, and Public Relations Society of America.

21 POINTS TO WATCH IN CHOOSING MEDIA

By STEWART HARRAL✦

WHATEVER the idea you wish to communicate it is rare that you can afford to use all possible media—newspapers, radio, direct mail, exhibits, etc.

Thus you have to determine whom you want to reach and what channels of communication your target group relies on most. Many intangibles, as well as tangibles, are involved in selecting the most effective media. Here are some simple tests you can apply in arriving at your choice:

1. What is the frequency of impact?

2. Does the medium under consideration possess certain psychological advantages?

3. Do people use it (consciously or unconsciously) for learning—as a source of information?

4. What is its competition (in terms of time, interest, impact, etc.)?

5. Has its effectiveness been measured in terms of the specific audience which you have in mind?

6. Can the receiver, listener or reader control the exposure? A newspaper reader, for instance, can set his own pace whereas the television viewer has no control whatever over the speed of the material which he sees.

7. Is the treatment limited? You may listen to a few minutes of news by radio. On the other hand, you might read several books on the same subject.

8. Is the channel specialized? The *Dog Lovers' Monthly* reaches a special segment of the public whereas *Time* reaches a general audience.

✦ *Professor Stewart Harral, Director of Public Relations Studies at the University of Oklahoma, is the author of ten books and more than 100 magazine articles on public relations.*

9. Is there a feeling of group participation? We know that a person is more likely to respond to an idea when he feels that others are likewise responding.

10. Does the medium possess an element of picturization? Naturally, this is very high in movies, television offerings, picture booklets and other media. Are pictures enough?

11. What is the degree of recall? This is usually much higher for visual materials (photographs, movies, graphs, charts, maps, etc.).

12. Can one medium carry the load or should we use multiple media?

13. What is the major aim of the medium—to entertain? Instruct? Persuade? Interpret? Or is it a combination?

14. What are the unique qualities of the audience to whom the ideas are being beamed? Think in terms of education, income, geographical location, age, sex, and other factors.

15. Do people possess emotional feelings toward the medium? Readers of the small home-town newspaper, for example, have an emotional feeling toward the publication. It is close to their lives.

16. Do people question the credibility of the medium?

17. Just how difficult is the material which you plan to project?

18. Will you communicate the ideas in a visual, auditory, or printed way? Combination?

19. What is the cultural level of my audience? What are the mores, customs, traditions, beliefs and cultural values which hold this group together?

20. Does the material lend itself to flexibility? Can it be sub-divided for use in a combination of media? Over a period of time?

21. What are the special space-time problems of this particular project? Example: It's easier to put over a few ideas at one Kiwanis Club than it is to get over the same ideas to 49 Kiwanis Clubs located all over the state.

You can lengthen the list by adding factors which you consider in choosing media. Here's the main thing: Be sure that you choose channels not just in terms of their immediate power but also in terms of longtime impact. ●

BOOK REVIEWS

CORPORATE PUBLIC RELATIONS

By JOHN W. HILL, *Harper & Brothers, New York, 1958. 173 pages. $3.50.*

Reviewed by Eric Johnston, President,
Motion Picture Association of America

Public relations is among our newest and should be one of the most beneficial of our modern professions.

In its name many fine, constructive and lasting activities are being carried on. They are of major significance and importance to our country.

In its name some silly and disgraceful things are being committed. They shame the more enlightened practitioners.

In his new book, *Corporate Public Relations,* John W. Hill, Chairman of Hill and Knowlton, Inc., separates the solid from the phony, and the wise, respected and responsible practitioners from the quacks and the charlatans. In itself this is a needed and a prodigious accomplishment.

If there is one characteristic that dominates the book, it is, I think, integrity. Mr. Hill keeps to the fundamentals, shuns the glittery, the showy. He builds public relations on a good sound structure.

Not every one of us will agree with all that Mr. Hill says, all that he asserts for the profession that he himself has so long honored. I think he would be disappointed if we all did agree with him completely. What a dull person that would make him, and us; and, more to the point, what a dull and boring book! But the book is not dull and boring; it is fascinating and informative and, in most instances, thoroughly convincing.

Corporate management has, fortunately for the United States, come a long way since John Hill, in 1927, in Cleveland, hung out a shingle reading, "Corporation Publicity." But, as he is at prudent pains to emphasize, it has not reached the end of the road yet. As he puts it:

"A small minority of corporate managers think and act as the large majority of industrialists fifty years ago. They think only in terms of short-term objectives, wholly oblivious to vital long-range goals important to the

corporation in building for its long-continuing success." In plain words, Mr. Hill says that most corporate managers have recognized and assumed their responsibilities to the communities they serve and warns the minority to "go modern" or get ready to go out of business.

"The true purpose of public relations is to foster and promote understanding among people," he writes. "In the corporation this is between the people of management and the people in the shop, the people who own the shares, the people who buy the company's products, the people in government, and the public as a whole."

That good public relations is necessary to the success of a corporation has been amply proved, and the book emphasizes that hood-winking practices by turning meanings upside down will bring destruction. "Good public relations has been called the corporate conscience—an indispensable attribute of modern and progressive business," he maintains. Only by maintaining good relations can a corporation "merit a continued vote of public confidence."

Mr. Hill warmly and rightly lauds the American capitalistic system, but warns that even though American capitalism has brought great prosperity to the American people as a whole, corporate management cannot take it for granted that it will continue to receive the support of the workers and consumers unless it continues alert to the value of good public relations.

"Experience has shown that it is not enough for the corporation to have good policies, perform good deeds, and then keep its own counsel," Mr. Hill admonishes. "The successful modern business must make sure that people—people of all kinds—know what it is doing and approve of its actions.

"Public opinion will no longer accept the shrugging silence of 'No comment' from business leaders on matters in the public domain."

Mr. Hill need not have confined this statement to business leaders. There are others in our society who could well take it to heart.

The men and women in the profession will read this book with pride and benefit. All the rest will find it stimulating, thought-provoking, and, after putting it down, will have a far better appreciation of the true value of public relations.

PRESS INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORY

Press Intelligence Inc., Washington, D. C. 171 pages. $15.00.

Reviewed by Samuel E. Stavisky,
Public Relations Consultant,
Washington, D. C.

At last! Here's a daily press publicity reference book which raises targets for the rapid-fire rifle rather than the blunderbuss shotgun.

The authors, who hide their identities under the corporate cloak of their press clipping service, are knowledgeable people. They concede that professional publicity pursuers know the "right time" and "right way" for getting their stint into the press. The authors' own contribution is the vital "right place," based on what they themselves describe as a "massive research effort on the actual content of newspapers."

For those who make any substantial part of their living out of garnering space in the daily papers, this new directory is a short-cut to a stack of clippings.

The *Press Intelligence Directory* first lists the "customers" (633 dailies and their Sunday editions). Next comes manna for the Washington PR men, in the form of a breakdown of the daily press by Congressional districts. Then there follows an analysis of the types of material each of the papers prints, together with a list of 4,000 local writers (not necessarily editors) in specialized fields. The final section deals with the distribution strength of some 500 wire service and syndicate writers.

For PR people who read as well as write, who try to impress the editors as well as their clients, the *Press Intelligence Directory* is a windfall. Read it and leap!

BUSINESS LETTERS THAT TURN INQUIRIES INTO SALES

By FERD NAUHEIM, *Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1957. 240 pages.*

Ferd Nauheim brings a public relations approach to his subject of letter writing in a book primarily designed for the businessman. Time and again he stresses the importance of attitude in writing letters that make friends out of potential enemies.

Large public relations staffs have special sections for the graceful handling of letters from the public. The practitioner in the small department who assumes this function as an added chore can probably improve

his letter writing with a little effort. At least Mr. Nauheim's book will encourage him to try.

The book is fast reading, the examples make sharp points, and many of them are amusing. Even if you feel you know all about writing letters, you can profit from going over the examples of authentic letters which Mr. Nauheim intersperses through the text. Such a reading will give important insight into the reactions of people to the written word.

PSYCHOTHERAPY: A MODERN THEORY AND PRACTICE

By E. LAKIN PHILLIPS, *Prentice-Hall, New York, 1956, 334 pp., $5.00.*

Particularly interesting because the author departs markedly from and takes issue with the depth-derived behavioral theorists.

BACON'S PUBLICITY CHECKER

R. H. Bacon Company, Chicago, 1958, 6th Annual Edition, 320 pp., $18.00.

A new permanent numbering system for its listings of 3,447 business, farm and consumer magazines in 99 separate market groups makes this stand-by favorite even more valuable to the practitioner; comprehensive, clear, and easy-to-manage press relations tool.

THE BRAIN PICKERS

By HALLIE BURNETT, *Julian Messner, New York, 1957, 319 pp., $3.95.*

A "Peyton Place" type of novel about the "commercial snake pit of the book business" and its "whole erratic coterie of publishers, agents, geniuses and near geniuses."

AN AD MAN AD-LIBS ON TV

By BOB FOREMAN, *Hastings House, New York, 173 pp., $4.50.*

A clever, sophisticated treatment of the TV medium by BBD&O's VP in Charge of Television and Radio. Practitioners will find Part IV: "Research?—If You Can Call It That" full of "school-of-hard knocks" information.

HEAD, HEART AND HEEL

By BILL TREADWELL, *Mayfair Books, Inc., New York. $4.00.*

A biography of "Uncle Don" Carney, the subject of radio's most famous anecdote. The father of the "free plug," he is credited with ten firsts in radio which netted him over a million dollars.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICES IN SIX INDUSTRIAL CORPORATIONS

By F. RHODES HENDERER, *University of Pittsburgh Press,* 1956. 232 pages.

The author made a two year study of the following major corporations, all of which have active PR programs: United States Steel Corporation, Aluminum Company of America, Westinghouse Corporation, Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, Koppers Company, and the Dravo Corporation. Based on his findings he presents a suggested model program for corporate PR.

HOW TO MAKE $18,000 A YEAR FREE-LANCE WRITING

By LARSTON FARRAR, *Hawthorn Books, Inc.,* New York, 1957. 276 pages. $4.95.

Most public relations men are writers. They will appreciate the forthright approach on Mr. Farrar to successful free lancing. The author shares his working secrets for all who have the ability to profit from them. His clear presentation demonstrates why he has been able to make $18,000 a year from his own writing.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

THE NEW ART OF SELLING
By ELMER G. LETERMAN, *Harper & Brothers,* New York, 1957. 280 pages. $3.95.

TECHNIQUE OF EXECUTIVE CONTROL
By ERWIN HASKELL SCHELL, *McGraw-Hill Book Company,* New York, 1957. 357 pages. $5.50.

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY, THE STUDY OF PERSONS
By RICHARD W. WALLEN, *McGraw-Hill Book Company,* New York, 1956. 388 pages. $6.00.

MIKE AND SCREEN PRESS DIRECTORY
Edited by ARNOLD LERNER, *Radio-Newsreel-Television Working Press Association,* New York, 1957. 243 pages, $10.00.

COMMUNITY PLANNING
Edited by HERBERT L. MARX, JR. *H. W. Wilson Company,* 205 pages. $2.

WORK AND AUTHORITY IN INDUSTRY
By REINHARD BENDIX. *John Wiley and Sons.* 466 pages. $7.50.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS REPORTING
By VICTOR J. DANILOV. *The Macmillin Company.* 487 pages. $5.

". . . DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR?"
By ARTHUR T. HADLEY. *Henry Holt and Company.* 63 pages. $1.50.

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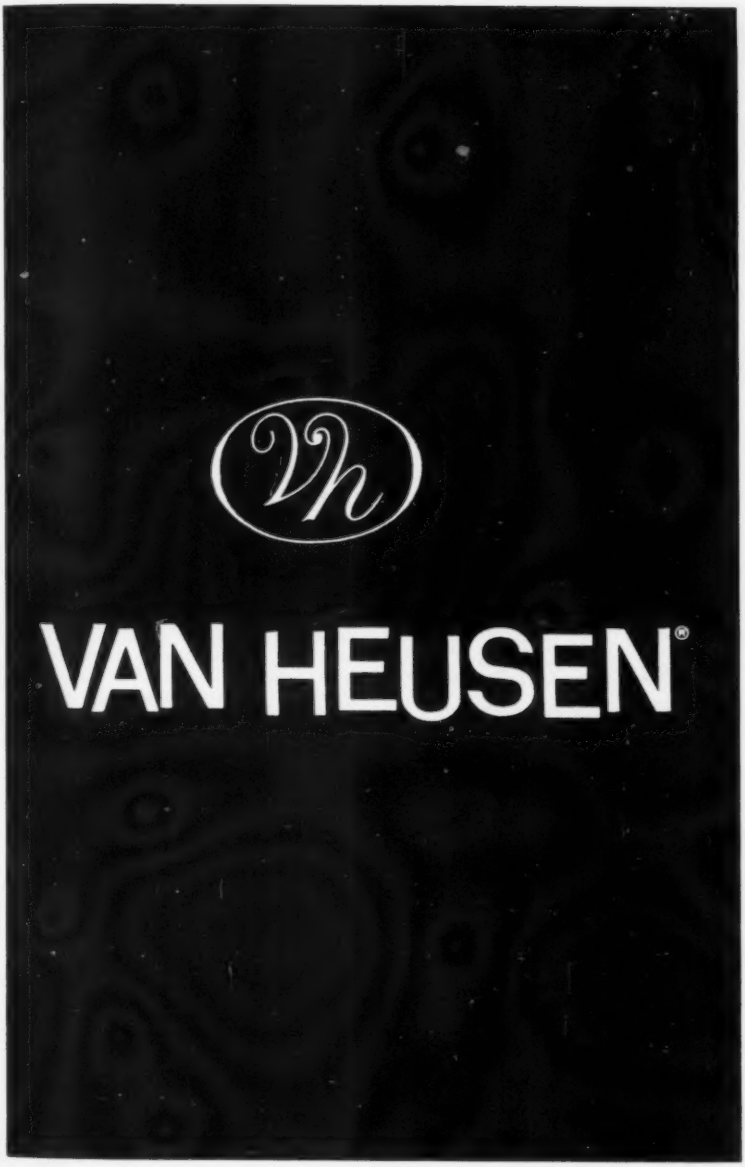
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